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# Comparative Analysis of Kim Family Political Discourse

A Quantitative Discourse Analysis



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## Executive Summary

This study was conducted to address three guiding questions:

1. How does DPRK define its key national interests/regional objectives in Northeast Asia and the Western Pacific? What are seen to be the major threats to each interest?
2. Does analysis of Kim Jong-un's discourse provide a cognitive assessment?
3. What are the most effective ways of communicating with Kim Jong-un?

### Summary and Implications for Strategic Communications with Kim Jong-un.

Kim Jong-un is far less geopolitically aware than Kim Il-sung and, similar to Kim Jong-il, is fairly rigid and unchanging in his political discourse. He exhibits more of an interest in economic development and in overall DPRK capability (including military) than his predecessor. The U.S. as leader of a Western, capitalist alliance is considered the ultimate threat to all DPRK national interests. Kim Jong-un appears to be relying less on Juche philosophy (see Changes in Political Ideology below) although he continues to use very abstract religious language such as sacredness and eternity. Based on these patterns and comparisons to his predecessors the following inferences seem reasonable answers to the guiding questions.

- The DPRK's capability (economic and military) are central concerns upon which he is most likely to focus.
- His lack of geopolitical awareness and mostly rigid discourse indicates a simple worldview and inflexible thinking style.
- Kim Jong-un may be shifting toward a more secular and pragmatic worldview, although Juche philosophy remains an important frame for his thinking, and therefore, Juche philosophy should be well understood when communicating with him.
- However, stressing more abstract transcendent themes over older communist and Juche rhetoric will probably be increasingly effective with Kim Jong-un.

## Specific insights concerning each of DPRK's three historic leaders

### Kim Jong-un.

Kim Jong-un's worldview as expressed in his political discourse is largely consistent with core concepts central to DPRK politics throughout its history. These core concepts include a dedication to communist ideals and adherence to Juche philosophy, which includes unquestioning obedience to the Kim leaders, the need for strict discipline and rules, unending revolutionary struggle, and dedication to creating a self-sufficient DPRK. However, he exhibits the following departures from his grandfather and/or father.

- Kim Jong-un lacks broader awareness of global politics, being myopically focused on the Korean peninsula and the U.S., in contrast to Kim Il-sung (but similar to Kim Jong-il).
- Kim Jong-il placed great emphasis on religious-like concepts and Juche philosophy, as Kim Jong-un continues to do so as well, although less than his father.
- While Juche philosophy is still central to how Kim Jong-un frames nearly every issue, he statistically is moving away from this frame.
- Upon taking power, Kim Jong-un retained his father's ideological agenda, but added new themes related to economic development and other strength and capability themes he associates with economic or military power.
- Kim Jong-il has changed his political discourse very little in the past six years.



**Kim Jong-il.**

Kim Jong-il was much more ideologically oriented and less globally aware than his father, and exhibited an absolutely rigid adherence to his Juche philosophical frame. He exhibited no ability to adjust his political perspective or interests despite economic crisis and widespread famine in the 1990s.

**Kim Il-sung.**

Kim Il-sung exhibited a broad awareness of global politics, and an ability to adapt his political discourse to historical changes. His pragmatism was most evident during the Korean war when he largely abandoned ideological interests in favor of pragmatic concerns of prosecuting a war and surviving as a nation. Despite originating Juche philosophy, Kim Il-sung exhibits far less ideological speech than his son and grandson.

## Study Overview

NSI conducted quantitative discourse analysis to identify which issues matter most to Kim Jong-un as represented in his public speeches since 2013 (Kuznar, 2013, 2017a, 2017c, 2017d). While these studies produced various insights into Kim Jong-un's worldview, interests, and decision calculus, it is difficult to assess whether or not his discourse represents a new strategic agenda or reflects the same DPRK political thinking that the U.S. has dealt with historically. To answer this question Kim Jong-un's public discourse was compared to his father, Kim Jong-il and grandfather, Kim Il-sung. Corpora representing the earlier leaders were analyzed in order to enable comparison of Kim Jong-un with his predecessors. The method of analysis employed yields quantitative assessments of the themes that reflect authors' worldviews, interests and aspects of their decision calculus. This report presents the key Findings of the research, describes the Corpora analyzed and details the Discourse Analysis methodology employed (see sections below).

## Findings

Significant patterns in DPRK leader discourse were detected in the following:

- Constancy of political themes
- Changes in political ideology
- Political ideologies that die out
- Changes in pragmatic political concerns
- Quasi-religious concepts
- Who concerns the DPRK?
- Emotive themes
- Use of rhetorical devices
- Change in discourse in relation to historical events and succession

### Constant Political Themes

There were two political categories that were consistently dominant throughout the history of the DPRK. Political ideology (a composite of communism, The Masses and Juche philosophy) is prominent for all of the Kim family. The density (see section "Key Metric: Density") of political ideological themes were highest for Kim Il-sung—far above his son and grandson—during his formative years as a young revolutionary and during the period of nation-building after the Korean War. Much of the prominence of political ideology is due to more specific political ideological concepts, such as Juche, The Masses, communism and democracy. The period of his development as a political leader makes sense, but the period of nation building is likely more significant. It was during this time that Kim Il-sung introduced the concept of Juche philosophy as a guiding framework for the DPRK's society.

Juche was introduced by Kim Il-sung in 1955 (Oh & Hassig, 2000, p. 17) and it is a key concept discussed in all major and minor speeches and writings. However, some of Kim Il-sung's major emendations occurred in both 1967 and 1972 when Juche was codified and incorporated into the DPRK's constitution. Kim Il-sung's son, Kim Jong Il, published major works on Juche philosophy throughout the 1970's, 1982 and more recently in 1996 (David-West, 2011, p. 105; Oh & Hassig, 2000).

Juche's most literal translation is "main foundation (Cumings, 1983, p. 289; Oh & Hassig, 2000, p. 17)," although it is often translated as "self-reliance" (Armstrong, 2005, p. 383; Cumings, 1983, p. 288; David-West, 2011, p. 99; Oh & Hassig, 2000, p. 17), but clearly has a broad, abstract meaning (Cumings, 1983, p. 289). The scholarly debate revolves around literal translations ("main foundation") versus emphasis on frequently reinforced themes ("self-reliance"), versus the broader contexts in which the term is used.

Kim Jong-il's "Ten Principles for the Establishment of a Monolithic Ideological System" 1974

1. Give your all in order to unify the entire society with the revolutionary ideology of the Great Leader Kim Il-sung.
2. The noblest duty is to respect and revere the Great Leader Kim Il-sung with complete loyalty.
3. Make absolute the authority of the Great Leader comrade Kim Il-sung.
4. Accept the Great Leader Comrade Kim Il-sung's revolutionary thought as your belief and take the Great Leader's instructions as your creed.
5. Observe absolutely the principle of unconditional execution in carrying out the instructions of the Great Leader.
6. Rally the unity of ideological intellect and revolutionary solidarity around the Great Leader Kim Il-sung.
7. Learn from the Great Leader comrade Kim Il-sung and master communist ideology.
8. Repay the Great Leader with loyalty and political awareness.
9. Establish strong organizational discipline so that the entire party, nation, and military operate uniformly under the sole leadership of the Great Leader comrade Kim Il-sung.
10. The great revolutionary accomplishments pioneered by the Great Leader Comrade Kim Il-sung must be succeeded and perfected by hereditary succession until the end.

Kim Il-Sung is elevated to a cult figure in Juche philosophy and its principles stand as a prescription for proper behavior toward him (and by extension his successors), which includes directing toward him and the DPRK state the following: all-out effort, honor, establishing his absolute authority, faith-based belief, unconditional obedience, strengthening his ideology, learning, loyalty, and establishing strict rules for society. Scholars have noted how Juche evolved from a set of ideological guidelines in the 1950s to essentially a religion focused on the Kim family (Armstrong, 2005; Cumings, 1983; David-West, 2011; Oh & Hassig, 2000). These elements are similar to and probably borrowed from Stalinism, which Kim Il-sung learned from his Soviet benefactors in the 1940s and early 1950s.

However, once Kim Il-sung initially established Juche philosophy, his emphasis on political ideology decreased, although it is always an important element of any DPRK leader's discourse. Interestingly, there is not another surge in the density of political ideology until Kim Jong-un assumes power in 2012. Even compared to his ideologue father, Kim Jong-il, Kim Jong-un can be considered an ideologue. **This is an indication that Kim Jong-un is particularly ideologically, versus pragmatically, influenced.**

One particular component of political ideology, the appeal to and claim of championing the masses, a bedrock element of communist ideology, is always prominent and varies little in the discourse of the DPRK's leaders (Figure 1).

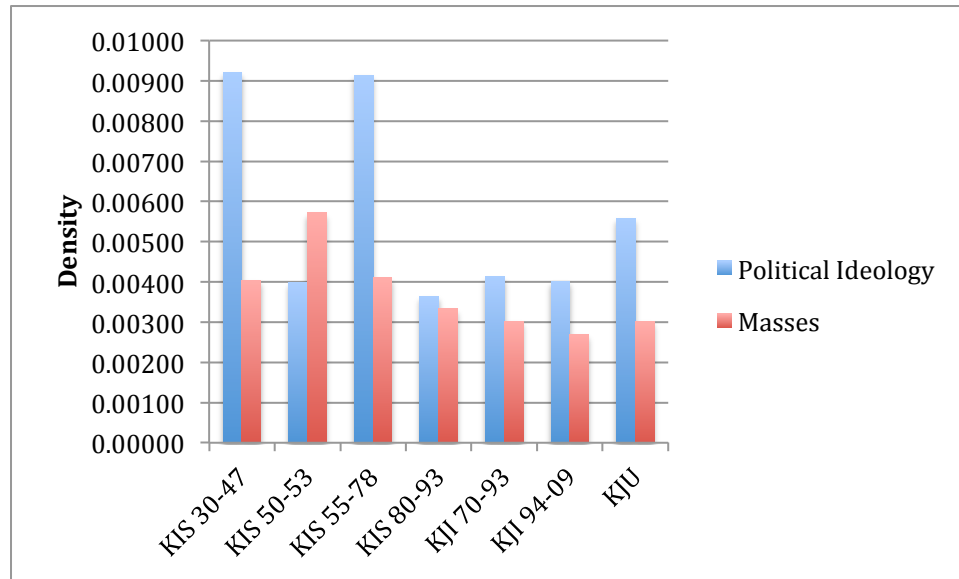


Figure 1. Constant Political Themes

## Changes in Political Ideology

While overall political ideology is prominent and varies little in the Kim's discourse, two elements demonstrate some interesting variation: communism and revolution. Communism is very dense during Kim Il-sung's formative years and during the post-Korean War years, mostly explaining the spikes in overall political ideology seen during these times. Curiously, when Kim Il-sung is in the throes of fighting the Korean War, this theme drops off dramatically, as though the pragmatic concerns with fighting a war overpowered Kim Il-sung's ideological agenda. These themes rapidly increase in density during Kim Jong-il's transition to power. One of his primary responsibilities, through the Propaganda and Agitation Department (PAD), was the full development of Juche and its philosophical principles as a guiding framework for every aspect of DPRK society.<sup>1</sup> Since the early 1990's, communism has remained a prominent theme, but has steadily diminished in importance, including through Kim Jong-un's assumption of power (Figure 2).

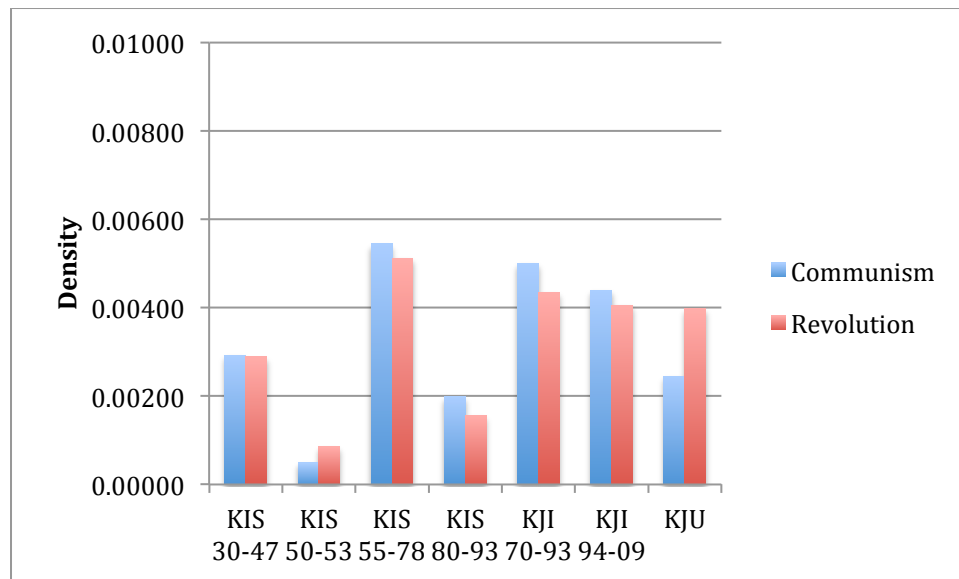


Figure 2. Communist Themes

<sup>1</sup> The Kim family has maintained *de facto* control of the PAD through Kim Jong-un's sister, Kim Yo-jong.



### Political Ideologies that Die Out

Two ideological elements, imperialism and democracy, figure very prominently in Kim Il-sung's early discourse, but decrease markedly in his late reign and dwindle to almost nothing for his successors. The pattern with regard to imperialism fits an early concern with Japanese imperial occupation of the Korean peninsula and the later expansion of Western influence and military occupation. The imperial motif continues to be used by Kim Jong-il and Kim Jong-un, but only sparingly. Kim Il-sung's early emphasis on democracy coincides with his revolutionary period when elections could be used to gain power. However once the DPRK is established as an autocratic state, references to democracy diminish, eventually becoming a rare theme (Figure 3).

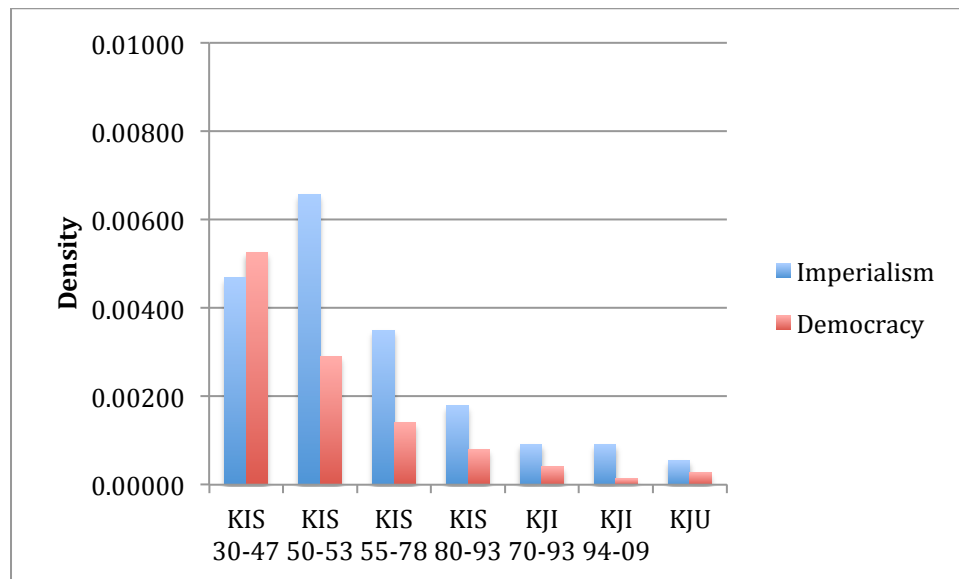


Figure 3. Political Themes that Diminish

## Changes in Pragmatic Political Concerns

Some political concerns are more pragmatic, such as the health of the economy or educating the populace. These concerns tend not to be prominent in the public discourse of DPRK leaders, although there is some interesting variation through time and by leader. The one period when both the economy and education were most prominently discussed was during the nation-building phase under Kim Il-sung. This makes sense considering the importance of economic growth and education in national development (Hanushek & Wößmann, 2007). These themes decrease markedly under Kim Jong-il, thus reinforcing the perception that they were second to his ideological agenda and that he was not competent in these areas. Under Kim Jong-un, there has been a slight increase in the emphasis on the economy, although it remains far below his grandfather's emphasis from the 1950s to the 1990s (Figure 4).

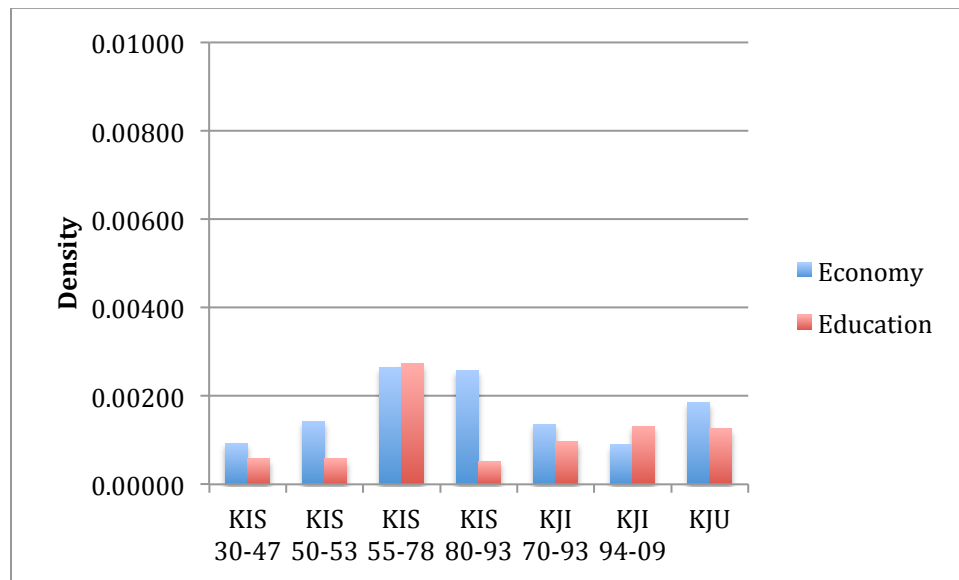


Figure 4. Pragmatic Political Concerns

## Quasi-Religious Concepts

As described above, experts have equated Juche philosophy to a state religion. The boundary between religion and political ideology can be blurry. Researchers (Arendt, 1951; Hoffer, 1951; Kula, 2005) note that even adherents to secular ideologies will employ religious-like language to establish a moral imperative for their views. Whether one considered Juche a political ideology or a religion, it is important to assess how religious-like language is used to reinforce the authority of Juche over the North Korean people. In order to assess the importance of these religious-like concepts, the codebook tracks use of religious-like language (references to sacredness, destiny, immortality, eternity, and metaphysical references specific to Korean culture, such as Mt. Paektu and Chollima, a supernatural horse, and DPRK culture, such as Juche). The density with which general metaphysical issues, Juche philosophy and religious terms are used by DPRK leaders is presented in Figure 5.

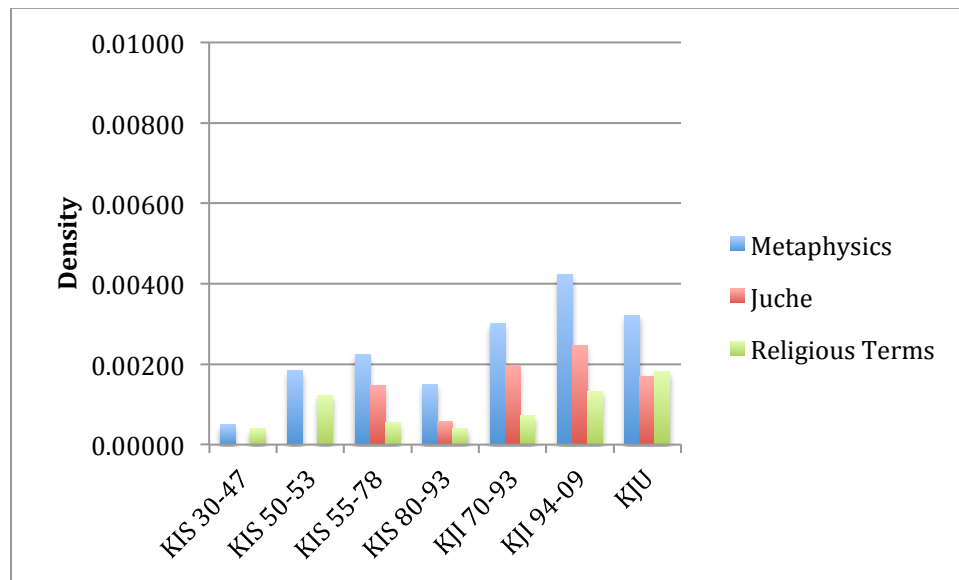


Figure 5. Quasi-Religious Concepts

Early in Kim Il-sung's career, he rarely used religious-like language. However he begins using it regularly during the Korean War, and its use grows, peaking during Kim Jong-il's period of rule. Kim Jong-un has decreased his use of religious-like language compared to his father, but it is still very frequently used. Kim Jong-un has actually increased his use of more abstract religious terminology (destiny, eternity, sacredness, infinity) and uses such terminology more than his predecessors. The "What If?" video presented by President Trump at the Singapore summit<sup>2</sup> contained much of this type of language, and this could have contributed to the favorable reception of the video by Kim Jong-un (Kuznar, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A838gS8nwas>

## Who Concerns DPRK?

Which polities and a leader mentions provides insight into who a leader perceives as important allies or adversaries. There are two stark contrasts between the founder of the DPRK Kim Il-sung, and his son and grandson. Firstly, Kim Il-sung demonstrated a global perspective by mentioning many countries and actors in his public discourse and writing. In contrast, his son Kim Jong-il and grandson Kim Jong-un, rarely mention any polities but three, i.e., The US, South Korea, and Japan. The second contrast concerns the density of mentions of these three polities and they are also the primary polities densely mentioned by Kim Il-sung. In contrast, even though these are practically the only three polities mentioned by Kim Jong-il or Kim Jong-un, they are seldom mentioned at all. The shift from Kim Il-sung's rule to that of his descendants appears to be a shift from a worldly and globalist view to a hyper-insular perspective focused only on the Korean peninsula, its traditional enemy Japan, and its arch-enemy, the US (but even then only to a small degree) (Figure 6).

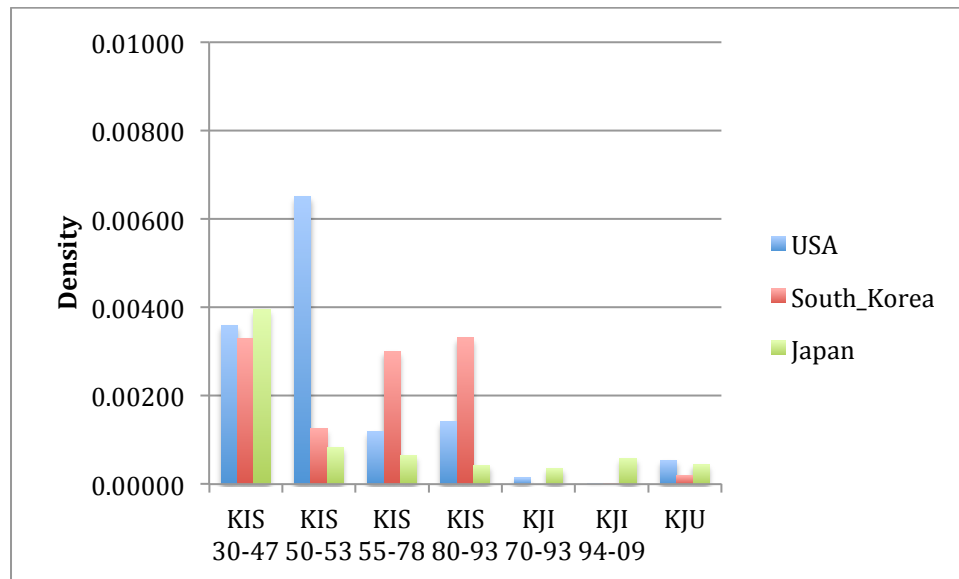


Figure 6. Discourse concerning US, South Korea and Japan

## Emotive Themes

Leaders typically deploy emotive themes to appeal to their audiences or as a reflection of their own emotive attachment to issues. All of the Kims deploy themes used by many leaders, and do so very often. The key emotive themes they deploy include strength, ability, and success of the DPRK. These themes remain fairly constant throughout the history of the DPRK. Kim Jong-un employs all three themes more than his predecessors, perhaps reflecting a stronger attachment to military and economic strength; much of his references concern DPRK's presumed abilities to excel in military might (especially nuclear) and economic progress (Figure 7).

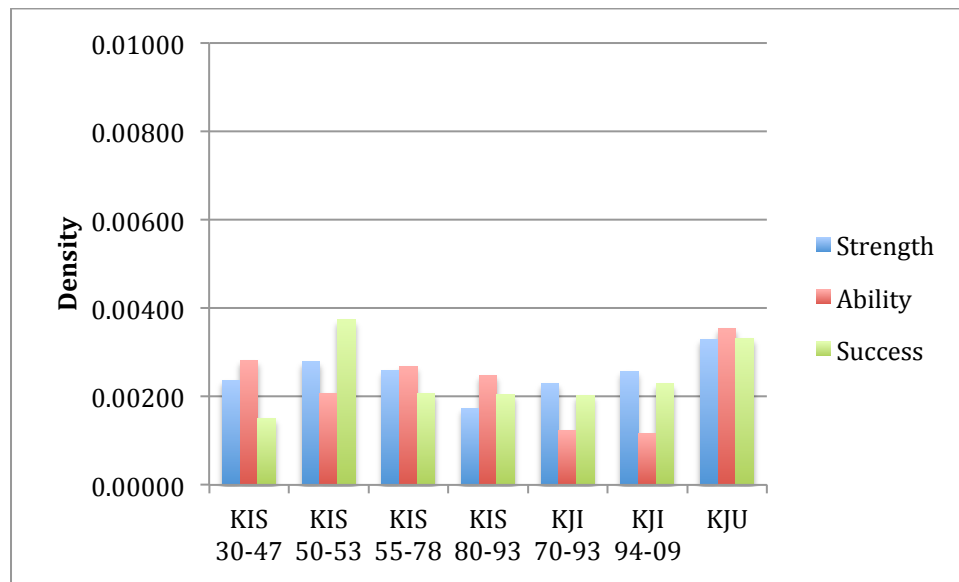


Figure 7. Emotive Themes

## Use of Rhetorical Devices

Rhetorical devices are language uses that strengthen the sentiment associated with a theme. Political figures typically make heavy use of rhetorical devices and the Kims are no different. They deploy common forms of rhetorical device used by political leaders, although they tend to use them more often. The rhetorical devices most prominent in their speech include hyperbolic language, intensifiers (typically adjectives that add emphasis such as “good,” “big,” “nearly”), and magnitude (use of numbers or language that implies quantity). Kim Il-sung notably rarely used titles and honorifics, however his son and grandson use them liberally (Figure 8).

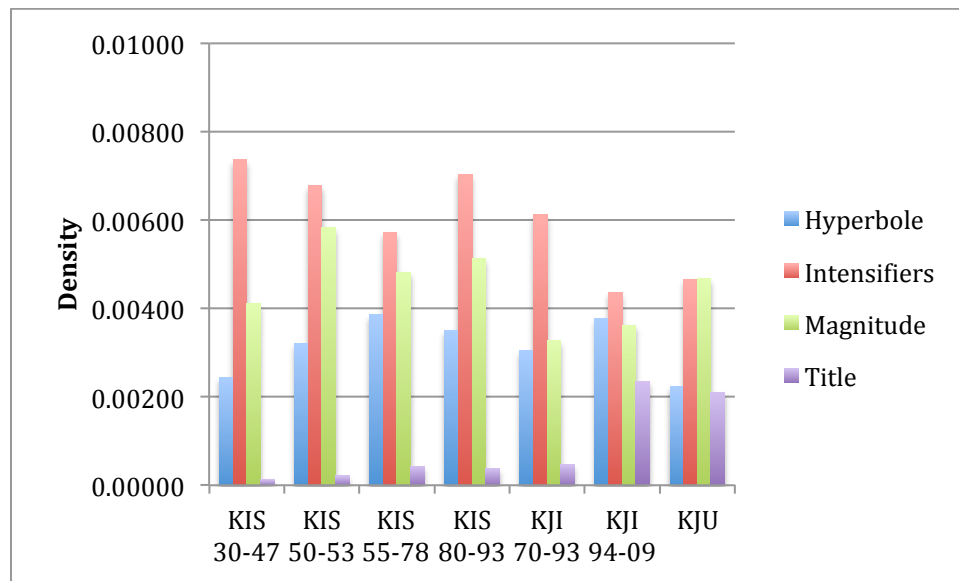


Figure 8. Rhetorical Devices

## Change

Examining the extent to which a leader changes his discourse can provide insight into how adaptable he is to changing historical circumstances. Examining the extent to which discourse changes between rulers provides insight into how independent they are from one another and how likely it is that national priorities will shift in regard to changes in power.

In order to assess these changes, we examine the degree to which themes that statistically significantly change between historical periods of a leader's rule or when power shifts from one leader to another. In addition, we examine statistically significant changes through time as measured by correlation coefficients between theme, density and time (Table 1).

**Table 1. Change in Discourse by Historical Period and Power Shift**

Transition	Themes Same	Themes Changed	Percent Change
<b>Kim Il-sung All Periods</b>	33	37	52.9%
<b>Kim Il-sung to Kim Jong-il</b>	9	15	62.5%
<b>Kim Jong-il All Periods</b>	9	1	10%
<b>Kim Jong-il to Kim Jong-un</b>	8	8	50%

Kim Il-sung demonstrated a high degree of adaptability in his discourse as the DPRK experienced shifts in its political climate. Typically, a little more than half of the themes experienced statistical changes as the DPRK went from a revolutionary movement, to a nation at war, to a growing nation, and to a nation undergoing a transition to new leadership.

Kim Jong-il's language use stands in stark contrast to his father's. There was very little change in language from Kim Jong-il's transition to power to the devastating economic collapse, drought and famines the DPRK experienced in the 1990s. Kim Jong-il began his assumption to power as an ideologue and continued to repeat his own party line—despite the massive challenges his country faced—thus characterizing him as a true demagogue. Unfortunately, this study lacks a representative corpus from his later years in power, during which time the DPRK experienced a partial economic recovery. A corpus from his later years would provide a firm test of this proposition.

In the shift in power from Kim Jong-il to Kim Jong-un, Kim Jong-un retained most of the significant themes espoused by his father, but significantly added a number of new themes prominent enough to be statistically significant. These themes are all related to economy and military strength and include: strength, ability, success, victory and economy/development.

Kim Jong-un has not been in power long enough to track any major historical changes in the DPRK's situation. However examination of statistically significant correlation coefficients provides some insight into how rigid his political discourse is. In fact, very few themes demonstrate any statistically significant change through time in Kim Jong-un's discourse, implying an overall rigid worldview and adherence to his political ideology. A few themes however, do change statistically through time, and they may indicate some shift in his ideology and worldview. The themes that exhibit change are mostly associated with Juche philosophy and religious-type language. Kim Jong-un demonstrates a steady decrease in his use of this type of language through time, possibly indicating a shift away from traditional, quasi-religious Juche philosophy (Table 2 & Figure 9).

Table 2. Decrease in Metaphysical and Religious Concepts during Kim Jong-un's Reign

Theme	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Metaphysical Themes	-0.442	0.004
Religious Concepts	-0.422	0.007

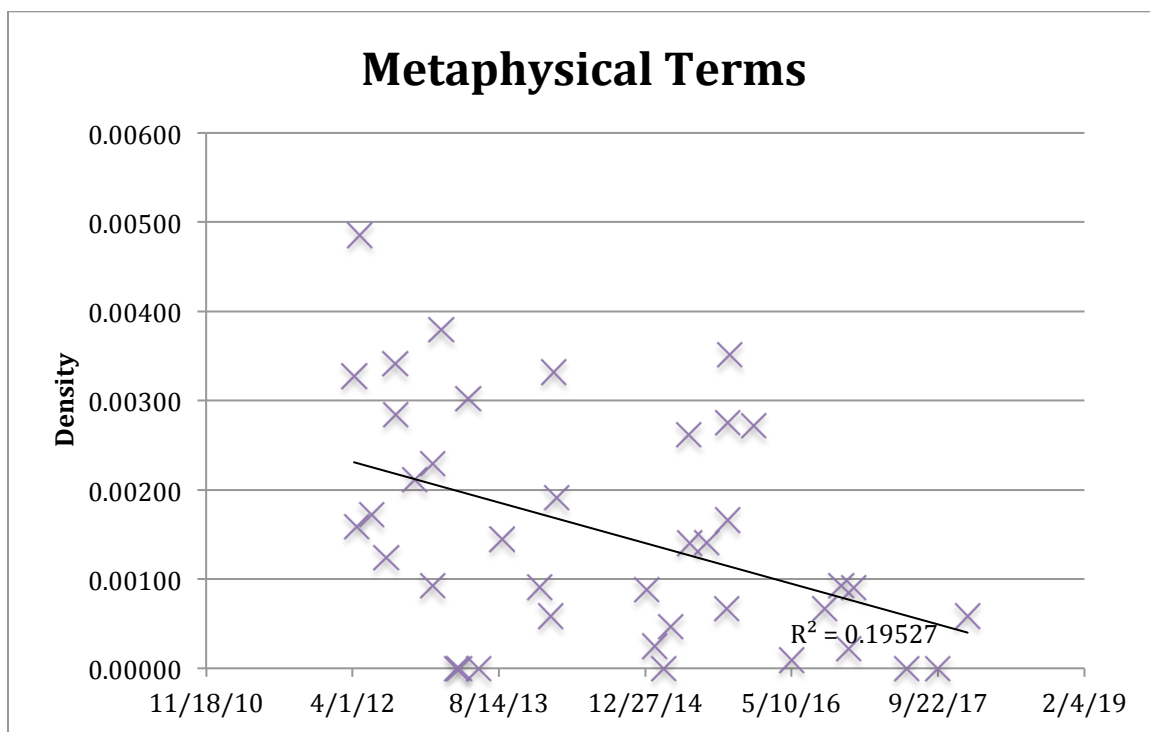


Figure 9. Decrease in Metaphysical Concepts during Kim Jong-un's Reign

This trend should be interpreted with caution as Juche philosophy remains the most prominent theme in Kim Jong-un's discourse, and some sub-elements of religious language, such as very abstract concepts (eternity, immortality, sacredness) actually increase through time.



## Methodology

### Corpora

All materials for this study were drawn from English translations provided by the DPRK on their official website library of their leaders' speeches and writings ([http://www.korea-dpr.com/e\\_library.html](http://www.korea-dpr.com/e_library.html)<sup>3</sup>) (Table 3). This site is not only a useful repository of DPRK political discourse, but since its contents are selected and translated by the DPRK, it represents the view they wish to project to the outside world. Therefore, the corpora may not provide a complete assessment of the political discourse of each leader per se, but rather the discourse that DPRK wishes to project, and in the manner they wish to project it.

Kim Jong-un has reigned for the past six years but in contrast, his father, Kim Jong-il, reigned for 18 years (1994 – 2011), and Kim Il-sung ruled the DPRK for 44 years and was a political leader for decades prior. The earlier leaders ruled for long periods in which watershed events occurred, including revolutions, wars, reconstructions, economic collapses, and famines. In order to control for the effects of these cataclysmic political events, the earlier leaders' corpora were divided into political periods and analyzed separately. For Kim Il-sung, his works were divided into a period of revolution and resistance to Japanese and later U.S. influence (1930-1948), the Korean War (1950-1953), post-war nation building (1955-1978), and the period of transition to Kim Jong-il's rule (1980-1993). Kim Jong-il's corpus was divided into the period of transition from his father's rule to his assumption of power (1970-1993) and a subsequent period of economic crisis and famine (1994-2002).<sup>4</sup>

Table 3. Corpora for DPRK Leaders

Leader	Dates	Significance	N Speeches	N Written Works	Total Docs <sup>5</sup>	Words
<b>Kim Il-sung</b>	1930-49	Revolution/Resistance	7	1	8	23,162
	1950-53	Korean War	14	2	16	47,302
	1955-78	Nation Building	8	3	11	70,465
	1980-93	Transition to Kim Jong-il	23	1	24	226,456
<b>Kim Jong-il</b>	1970-93	Transition to Kim Jong-il	16	7	23	331,192
	1994-02	Economic Crisis/Famine	1	9	10	64,167
<b>Kim Jong-un</b>	2012-18	Kim Jong-un	41	0	41	152,667
<b>Totals</b>			103	23	133	915,411

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.korea-dpr.com/e\\_library.html](http://www.korea-dpr.com/e_library.html); <https://www.ncnk.org/resources/publications?category=34>; <https://www.marxists.org> & <http://www.korean-books.com.kp/en/search/?page=work-leader2>

<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, only one document representing the latter period was available for use in this study.

<sup>5</sup> There are not enough cases of speeches versus written documents to allow for any statistical comparison per period. However, no possible differences between genera were apparent in the readings of the various documents.

Subdividing the total corpus in this manner permits assessment of how different political events may have impacted the worldview, values and interests of the leaders, as well as how their political discourse and philosophy may have evolved through time. Furthermore, creating separate corpora for each leader and each significant time period within a given leader's rule ways permits a diachronic analysis of how Korean leaderships' worldview and concerns change throughout the history of the DPRK in relation to different historical challenges and during transitions of power. The DPRK has been based on very particular political philosophies, such as Soviet-style communism, and of course its unique Juche philosophy. Comparing across the three Kims and across different historic periods will also provide insight into any enduring and constant particulars in DPRK political thought. Finally, comparison of trends in each leader's discourse may provide insights into each leader's rigidity or flexibility, as well as the sophistication of their decision calculus. These insights are particularly valuable for assessing Kim Jong-un's ability or willingness to adjust his priorities and capability for compromise in negotiations.

### **Kim Il-sung**

The first period of Kim Il-sung's corpus covers his early years as a revolutionary and his leadership of the resistance against Japanese occupation, his post-WWII leadership against Western influence on the Korean peninsula, and ending in 1948 with his appointment as Supreme Leader of North Korea. During WWII, he was heavily influenced and trained by the Soviets and actually attained the rank of Major in the Soviet Red Army. The period of the Korean War (1950-53) is a landmark period in Korean history. The period after the war was a time of Kim Il-sung's consolidation of power and building the national economy. He delivered a famous and very influential speech in 1955, in which he introduced the framework for Juche philosophy, which became the dominant frame for North Korean political thought and a *de facto* state religion, and is included in the corpus for this period. The rest of the corpus for this period consists of eight speeches and two writings, and is concentrated in the years 1968-78. During the 1970s, Kim Il-sung groomed his son, Kim Jong-il, for an eventual assumption of power. Kim Jong-il was appointed to key positions in the Worker's Party of Korea during the 1970s, was referred to as "Dear Leader" by the early 1980s, and quickly assumed power after his father's death in 1994. Therefore, the period from roughly 1980 to 1993 represents a period of transition for Kim Il-sung to his son's eventual rule.

### **Kim Jong-il**

With respect to Kim Jong-il's period of rule, the period from the 1970s to 1993 was a period of transition during which he increasingly assumed power, as noted above. Beginning in 1994, as Kim Jong-il assumed power, North Korea was hit with devastating droughts and an economic collapse, the combined effects of which likely resulted in the deaths of millions. Following 2002, Kim Jong-il began liberalizing markets and instituting reforms to pull the DPRK out of the crisis. While the DPRK's economy fell far behind South Korea's during this time, it could be seen as a period of recovery. Unfortunately, the corpus lacks representation of Kim's discourse from this period, except one speech.

### **Kim Jong-un**

Kim Jong-un assumed power in 2012 following his father's death. This brief period of eight years is represented by 41 speeches.

## Discourse Analysis

People knowingly and unknowingly signal their values and intentions in the way they use language (Beeman, 2001; El-Badawy, Comerford, & Welby, 2015; Fairclough, 2001; Rahimi & Sahragard, 2006; van Dijk, 2005). Thematic analysis focuses on themes people employ that reveal what matters to them (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012; Ryan & Bernard, 2003), while discourse analysis focuses on the linguistic tools people use to deploy and emphasize these themes (Farnell & Graham, 1998; Schiffrin, 2003; van Dijk, 2005). The approach used in this study combines thematic analysis and discourse analysis to identify which issues matter most to a speaker and to what degree they do so. Because people are often unaware of the extent to which they signal their values and intentions, identification of key themes can provide early indicators and warnings (I&W) of political actions. The authors have employed this approach in studies of both state actors (Fenstermacher, Kuznar, & Yager, 2012; Kuznar, 2013, 2014, 2016b; Kuznar, Popp, & Peterson, 2016; Kuznar, Suedfeld, Morrison, & Spitaletta, 2014; Kuznar & Yager, 2013, 2016; Kuznar, Yager, Clair, & Stephenson, 2012) and non-state actors (Kuznar, 2016a, 2017b; Kuznar & Hunt, 2015; Kuznar & Moon, 2014; Kuznar & Yager, 2012).

## Codebook Taxonomy

The codebook is a taxonomy of themes and rhetorical devices that represent topics mentioned, persons, places, things, ideas, and ways of using language that amplify the sentiment associated with the themes. The following terms describe the highest-level categories of the codebook taxonomy:<sup>6</sup>

- **Theme** – something that can be nominalized (named); can be a person, place, thing, idea, or emotion
- **Emotive Theme** – themes that convey emotion (sentiment); their mere mention evokes an emotive response
- **Rhetorical Device** – a way of using language to amplify or dampen sentiment
  - Includes repetition, lists, intensifiers (very, huge), lexicalization (special word choice), pejoratives (contemptuous or demeaning terms), use of kin terms, titles, etc.

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<sup>6</sup> As a convention, actual themes and rhetorical devices will be capitalized and italicized throughout the text, in order to differentiate them from more generic uses of the terms. When appropriate, footnotes defining themes will be given.

The primary codebook categories are found in Table 4.

Table 4. Primary Codebook Categories

Code Category	Sub-Category	Definition
<b>Entities</b>		Countries, formal organizations, regions, and sub-state groups
<b>Cultural Emotive Values</b>		Themes that evoke emotions in audiences, often culture-specific
	Extreme Negative Emotive	A cultural theme that tends to evoke an extremely negative response.
	Negative Emotive	A cultural theme that tends to evoke a negative response that is not extremely negative
	Extreme Positive Emotive	A cultural theme that tends to evoke an extremely positive response.
	Positive Emotive	A cultural theme that tends to evoke a positive response that is not extremely positive.
<b>Political Themes</b>		
	Positive Cohesive Concerns	Political issues that tend to imply cooperation.
	Disruptive Security Concerns	Political issues that tend to imply conflict
	Other Security Concerns	
	Space Themes	
<b>Rhetorical Devices</b>		Ways of using language that amplify or dampen the sentiment associated with a theme

## Semi-automated Coding

In order to facilitate rapid coding of large corpora of text, the autocode feature of MAXQDA qualitative data analysis software was used. This required development of a thesaurus of terms and phrases that would represent a particular theme. For instance, the strings, “seiz,” “aggress,” or “attack” might represent the theme of Aggression. The thesaurus is the accumulated result of ten years of research

application to national security issues (Kuznar, 2013, 2017b; Kuznar & Hunt, 2015; Kuznar, Popp, & Peterson, 2017; Kuznar & Yager, 2012; Kuznar et al., 2012; Toman, Kuznar, Baker, & Hartman, 2010). The codebook contains 324 codes for themes and rhetorical devices, including 18 themes related to outer space and space technologies. The codebook is refined with each new project as new codes are added and better ways of representing themes and rhetorical devices are discovered. The coding for this project represents the codebook as it existed January 3, 2018.

### Key Metric: Density

The key metric for measuring themes is **density**: the number of times a theme occurred in a document or speech, divided by the number of words in that document. This provides a normalized measure of how often a theme is used that can be compared across documents and between authors, groups, and across time. The underlying assumption is that the more densely a theme is used, the more important it is to the author, and therefore to a potential audience. Comparison of densities between themes also places a theme in a broader context, and thus guards against bias by judging the relative importance of themes. Theme densities were calculated for each document, and the variations of these densities through time were used to identify trends and possible indicators and warnings (I&W). Only those trends that were statistically significant at the  $p < .05$  level or less are reported.

### Metrics for Sentiment and the Use of Emotional Language

The use of rhetorical devices and emotionally charged themes are ways to interject emotive appeal into an argument. Emotionality may be an indicator that the speaker is in a more emotive state, as opposed to a more rational and deliberative state. The ability to detect departures from a rational state of mind can provide clues that the speaker's decision calculus is departing from the deliberative, cost/benefit calculus that is at the heart of traditional deterrence theory (USSTRATCOM, 2006).

In order to measure the use of more emotive language, themes were classified as Extreme Negative Emotive, Negative Emotive, Extreme Positive Emotive, and Positive Emotive. In addition, Rhetorical Devices were coded. Each of these categories was tallied for each document and subsequently normalized as densities. In addition to these categories, the Extreme Negative and Negative Emotive themes were summed as were the Extreme Positive and Positive Emotive themes. This provides nine measures of the use of emotive language against which different actors or speakers can be compared.

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